2: Thompson E-5 (1933-1934)1940 OQ6 Lau OQ6
Kambara

621 of Tchosaia, married Tangatanga, the sister of Lutumailangi, who was the father of Manoa.
618

The Matandravu subclan, according to its pedigree, is descended from Sovuthe, a younger brother of Lutumailangi and Tangatanga of Vuanitavola, who went to Komo. A few of his descendants now live in Tokalau. Matandravu formerly held the hereditary clan title of chief of Tokalau.

The clan Katoka is composed of two subclans: Katoka and Saumua. For several years each has received a share in the feast, and they are in the process of separating into two clans. The Katoka group holds the titles of herald and chief of crops to the chief of Kambara. Katoka is the oldest clan in the village and owns more land than either of the other clans.

In Tokalau the old hamlet grouping of clans has been obscured because the village has expanded in order to allow space between the houses. The original plan of the village may be seen in the oldest section, called Nakoro (the village) at the south end of Tokalau (fig. 3; table 1). Here the three clans lived in local units. According to informants, Vuanikathu occupied the south end of the old village. The clan lived in a group of houses, the foundations of which may be seen southeast of Vale Levu, the house of the chief of Kambara (fig. 3, 1). This is still the main village site of the clan. Vuanitavola clan occupied its present site north of Vuanikathu. The Katoka clan lived between Vuanitavola and the cliffs. The old ceremonial ground was centrally located between the houses of the headmen of the noble clans. Recently the village has expanded under government regulation toward the north. The new section is called Koro Vou (New Village). It is divided into three strips running from cliff to shore and occupied from south to north by Katoka, Vuanikathu, and Vuanitavola clans respectively. The new ceremonial ground is located on the border between the old and the new villages.

[423] The government house in Tokalau (fig. 3, 26) was built by the people of Kambara, Namuka, and Komo and is the property of the three islands. The church and the minister's house (fig. 3, 10) are on Vuanitavola land but
[427] are considered the property of the mission. The store and copra sheds (fig. 3, 25), also on Vuanitavola land, have been leased to a Chinese trading company.

LOMATCHI

There are three clans in the village of Lomatchi: Nakaka, Nawi, and Levuka. The people of Lomatchi know little of their pedigrees, but apparently all the clans in Lomatchi belong to the land phratry. The Nakaka clan-hamlet, situated in the center of the village, holds the highest rank.

The Nawi clan pedigree shows that Nawi was formerly composed of two subclans, Nawi and Lomatchi. The Lomatchi branch is now called Nawi. The subclan Nawi was started by Loweni and Kani, who came to Lomatchi about

2: Thompson E-5 (1933-1934)1940 OQ6 Lau OQ6
Kambara

423 tend to remain within the subclan but if it dies out its lands revert to the clan. Every male born within it inherits a right to use part of the clan lands, which are not transferable. Usually he receives his share of land when he marries. However, a bachelor who has his own men's house has his own land. He contributes the produce from his gardens to the group with which he eats. Before receiving his own land a young man works his father's land under his father's supervision.

Often the male *veitathini* (brothers and parallel cousins) of one generation in a subclan work the land jointly under the supervision of the first-born. The land division between *veitathini* is not fixed, but each works a piece with the help of his sons.

423 Land ownership is further complicated by the *kerekere* system (pp. 207-
● 427 208). Unused plots are often borrowed. If a man wants more land he goes either to the clan headman or to an individual who is not using all his land and solicits the use of it. If his request is granted he may be given it in usufruct for a definite or an indefinite length of time. In return he delivers a portion of
[177] the crop, called *i thava ni vanua*, as rent to the owner. The natives say that the payment of rent is recent and was introduced by the Tongans.

The only surviving male of the subclan Naitathini of Vuanikathu, Tokalau, is Tchitoko, aged about ten years. Before Tchitoko's father died he appointed Tchuta of Mbete subclan of the same clan as guardian to Tchitoko (*i solosolo i Tchitoko*). The guardian works Tchitoko's land and provides the boy with kilts. He has rented part of the land to Naivotavota clan, Nggalinggali, which presents to the boy part of each harvest as rent. Tchitoko will take over the use of the Naitathini land when he is old enough to work it.

423 To procure the use of land outside his clan, a man turns to his mother's clan. His *vasu* (sister's son) rights do not include appropriation of land without permission. To use a house site in the hamlet of his mother, for instance, a man makes his request to his mother's brother without the ceremonial presentation of property. His mother's brother says, "Please yourself. It's yours. Pick out what you want." If, however, his mother's clan has no suitable site, his mother's clan goes to the clan of his mother's mother for a house site. The natives say that a man may solicit land from a clan to which he is not *vasu* by presenting a whale's tooth with his request, but this is rarely done. In cases of matrilocal residence usufruct often develops into inheritance on the part of the children, who become members of their mother's clan.

Since the bush is free, a man may take timber for houses, canoes, or woodwork from any part of the island. Such timber is called *kathu ni lekutu*. A man does not clear land just anywhere in the bush, although he is allowed
[558] to do so. He goes to the bush land of his clan to make his clearing. Natives say that if he does not do so people will talk about him and he will lose face.

3: Thompson E-5 (1933-1934) 1940 OQ6 Lau OQ6
Kambara

Since 1912 the native lands commission has been working on the difficult task of establishing native land titles. The native lands commission, through the native lands ordinance of 1905, is charged with the duty of ascertaining what lands in each province are the rightful and hereditary property of native Fijian owners, and whether the ownership is by clan or by some other division or sub-division of the group. The commission consists of a European chairman and two native chiefs of high rank, one of whom is Ratu Sukuna, the district commissioner of Lau.[29] When I visited Lau the commission had not yet begun work in the southern islands and native land titles had not yet been established in this area. Hence the old native system was undisturbed.

As a result of the government land policy no lands in southern Lau,[30] which offers little except copra production to encourage European settlement, have been alienated except village lots leased by trading companies in Suva for trade stores. In the area surveyed there were just three stores, one in Tokalau on Kambara, one on Namuka and one on Mothe. There were no Europeans living in southern Lau, and the only residents other than natives or half-castes found in the area surveyed were the Chinese who ran these stores and a Japanese family on Namuka.[31]

The emphasis on land laid by the land laws and the inquiries of the native lands commission have sharpened the native's evaluation of his hereditary lands. This is heightened in southern Lau by the scarcity of good garden land and the high value of native hardwoods which grow in the jungle.

[29] The members have the power to summon and examine under oath persons whom they think able to give information concerning land under investigation, and to require attendance of all persons claiming or interested in the land. The decision of the commission is final unless appeal is made within sixty days of the announcement of the decision to the governor. The lands are surveyed at the cost of the proprietary unit. By 1936 3,539,307 acres had been surveyed. (*Annual Report*, Fiji, 1936, p. 71.)

[30] The term "southern Lau" is used to denote the islands of the Lau group south of Lakemba, exclusive of the Moala group.

[31] This information, obtained in the year 1933-34, is substantiated by the 1936 census.

3: Thompson E-5 (1933-1934) 1940 OQ6 Lau OQ6
Kambara

working the soil. It tends, however, to discourage attempts to improve gardening technics and it also tends to keep the population at subsistence level. Instead of devising ways of acquiring a surplus of food, by means of production or trade, to be fermented and stored against drought or hurricane, the natives feel they need not bother since the government will come to their aid with rice and flour in case of hurricane or famine. Hence the chief administrative problem regarding the land in southern Lau is how to stimulate interest and initiative in cultivating the soil. This problem will be discussed in the next section and in Chapter VII.

In parts of Fiji desirable for settlement, the government policy of protection of native lands has made possible the development of a class of native landlords who live idly off the rents from their lands. It has also had a marked effect on the economic development of the colony, for many native owners of commercially valuable land refuse to lease any of their holdings, even though they actually use but a small part for their gardens or plantations. The difficulties of acquiring land for settlement have been so great that they have actually discouraged or prevented settlement.

The deadlock over land in Fiji has been the serious concern of the administration for many years. In an attempt to meet the problem the great council of chiefs, which met in 1936, passed the following resolution: "That in the opinion of this Council it is to the best interests of the native race that all lands (including leases) not required for the maintenance of the Fijian owners be opened for settlement; that to further this end a committee be appointed to inquire into and determine the amount of land needed for the proper development by the native owners; and that all land (including leases) not so required be handed over to the government to lease on behalf of the Fijians."[33]

The acceptance of this recommendation by the legislative

[33] *Annual Report*, Fiji, 1936, p. 59.